

CHURCH OF HOPE EVANGELISM AND MINISTRY TRAINING COURSE BY EMAIL AND WEBSITE: **STUDY GUIDE: WEEK FOUR**

TOPIC FOUR: THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING A CLEAR GOD GIVEN VISION AND BEING CONTINUALLY FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

INTRODUCTION TO WEEK FOUR:

Over the past three weeks we have looked at the importance of having a lifestyle of prayer (week 1), building our life on the Word of God (week 2) and last week the importance of all that we do in life and ministry being undergirded by love (week three). This week's teaching will focus on two very important aspects of our life and ministry that will help us to live fruitful lives in the times that we are now living in. **(2 Timothy 3:1-5)**

Like never before there is a great urgency to equip and empower all Christians to be strong in their walk with the Lord and in encouraging all believers to help lead others to Christ. The message of the gospel is good news and there are so many people that need to be reached with the gospel message. The two areas that I will be covering in this study guide are keys to helping us to remain FOCUSED and EMPOWERED in our walk with the Lord. For this week's study our attached readings will cover this topic in more detail with this study guide highlighting the major things to consider in relation to this week's topic and some related Scriptures. Again the teachings come from our Pastors Workshop Guidelines and teachings manual that can be downloaded from our Downloads page on our website: www.coh.org.au

I will begin by looking at why having a clear God given vision for our life and church is so important, as well as some things to consider in relation to knowing God's will and plan for our life and in seeing His destiny for our lives and churches coming to pass

- 1) HAVING A CLEAR GOD GIVEN VISION FOR OUR OWN LIFE HELPS US TO STAY FOCUSED IN OUR WALK WITH THE LORD.** The enemy will continually try and distract and discourage us from following God's plan for our life. Having a clear God given vision for our life is crucial when we are going through the storms of life. With a clear vision for our life and churches, we get up each day with a clear focus and purpose. Without a clear God given vision for our lives, people can make wrong choices in life and live undisciplined lives. **(Proverbs 29:18)** Each day once gone can never be regained.
- 2) HAVING A CLEAR GOD GIVEN VISION FOR OUR CHURCH WHICH THOSE IN OUR CHURCH CAN READ AND PARTNER WITH.** As leaders of churches we need to spend time with the Lord to seek His strategy for our churches in reaching our communities with the gospel. Having a clear written down vision for our churches helps to attract people to be a part of the church's mission. Leaders of successful and active churches have the ability to clearly communicate the vision of the church to those who attend and to encourage people to become **CONNECTED TO THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH**. When God puts a vision on a leader's heart, it is easy to communicate that vision to others. God's work done in His way will bear much fruit. This is why seeking the Lord for His vision and direction for our churches is crucial. "Unless the LORD builds the house, They labour in vain who build it; ... " (Psalm 127:1) The LORD said to the prophet Habakkuk, "Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; Because it will surely come, It will not tarry." **(Habakkuk 2:2-3)**
- 3) AS A CHURCH WE NEED TO HAVE A CLEAR VISION FOR REACHING THE LOST IN OUR COMMUNITY (Mark 16:15), FOR MAKING MATURE DISCIPLES (Matthew 28:19-20), FOR TRAINING AND RAISING UP LEADERS WHO CAN TEACH OTHERS ALSO (2 Timothy 2:2) AND FOR HELPING TO ENCOURAGE ALL CHRISTIANS TO FLOW IN THEIR MINISTRY GIFTS AND CALLINGS (Ephesians 4:11-16)** The role of the five-fold ministry is to help equip and to edify all believers to be fruitful in their walk with the Lord and to use their gifts to help see God's Kingdom advanced here on earth. Every believer has a unique ministry. **(Ephesians 2:10)** Having a clear vision for the above areas of church ministry enables us to i) Preach relevant sermons and messages, ii) To set up small groups for leadership development and to meet the pastoral needs of those in our church, and to set up ministry initiatives to reach out to the community with the gospel and to meet the needs of the children and youth in our church **(Proverbs 22:6)**

4) WE MUST PRAYERFULLY MAKE PLANS TO SEE THE VISION COME TO PASS (Proverbs 16:3) (Proverbs 3:5-6) MAKING PLANS AND SETTING GOALS HELPS TO SEE THE VISION COME TO PASS IN GOD'S TIMING

Making plans and setting goals helps us to achieve more each day and to be fruitful in our life. Making plans and setting goals helps us to see God's vision and purpose for our life and church unfolding and coming to pass. **In the book of Proverbs we read, "The plans of the diligent lead surely to plenty, but those of everyone who is hasty, surely to poverty."** (Proverbs 21:5)

5) THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF GOD'S WILL FOR OUR LIFE IN EACH SEASON OF OUR LIFE. Maintaining an intimate walk with the Lord is crucial in knowing the will of God for our life and in seeing God's plan for our life unfolding. King David wrote, "***The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD and He delights in his way.***"(Psalm 37:23) The Apostle Paul wrote, "See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is." (Ephesians 5:15-17)

KNOWING THE WILL OF GOD FOR OUR LIFE IS CRUCIAL FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS;

- i. God's ways are higher than our ways.
- ii. Fruitfulness comes from following God's plan for our life (There are different seasons in our life and ministry)
- iii. We will not waste our time in doing unproductive activities and we will delegate tasks that others should do
- iv. We are most anointed when we flow in our gifts and callings
- v. We see God opening up doors that no man can close and ministry is done without striving
- vi. Provision and favour come from being in the centre of God's will for our life. God's will, God's bill
- vii. We will be the greatest blessing to the wider Body of Christ as we remain positioned where God has placed us in the Body of Christ (We all need one another and our God given destiny will always be worked out in relationship with others who God connects us with for His plan and purpose for our lives), and
- viii. We will ultimately be rewarded for how faithfully we have done what God has called us to do for Him (Isaiah 55:8-9) (John 15:16, Isaiah 1:19) (Romans 12:4-8) (1 Peter 4:11) (Matthew 16:27) (1 Corinthians 3:13-15)

6) THE IMPORTANCE OF JOURNALING WHEN GOD SPEAKS TO US. To see God's vision and plan for our lives and churches coming to pass, we need to continually seek the Lord for His ongoing directions and counsel (Jeremiah 23:18) so that we can gain His wisdom (James 1:5) and strategies to see the vision becoming a reality. It is so important that when God speaks to us that we journal what He speaks to us so that we do not forget what He has spoken to us. When written down, we can remind ourselves of what God has spoken to and promised us, particularly when we are going through the more challenging times of life.

7) THE IMPORTANCE OF ENCOURAGING ALL THOSE IN OUR CHURCHES TO KNOW GOD'S WILL AND PLAN FOR THEIR LIFE AND TO LIVE WITH ETERNITY IN MIND – True joy and purpose for a believer only comes from them knowing Christ intimately and from pursuing God's plan for their life. (John 10:10) (Matthew 25:14-23) AS A TEAM OUR CHURCHES CAN MAKE A GREAT IMPACT IN OUR COMMUNITIES FOR CHRIST As each believer uses their gifts we see growth in the Body of Christ (Ephesians 4:16) and communities being changed by the love of Christ as believers work together to serve the community.

8) A GOD GIVEN VISION HELPS OUR LIVES AND CHURCHES TO MAKE A GREAT DIFFERENCE IN THIS WORLD **In pursuing God's vision and plan for our life and churches, we will see God do incredible things in and through our lives and churches. Every God given idea and plan has the potential to transform the lives of many. We must not limit what God wants to do in and through our lives and churches. The Apostle Paul wrote, "Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us." (Ephesians 3:20) The LORD said to the Prophet Jeremiah in prison, "Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know." (Jeremiah 33:3)**

There are three short teachings for this topic which I have included for this part of this week's study:

- i) Every Great Christian Leader has a clear vision for their life and church, ii) An overview of what is important for all church leaders, and iii) The importance of setting goals

I will finish this week's study by secondly emphasising the importance of being continually filled with the Holy Spirit. As we give out to others we ourselves need to be continually filled with the Holy Spirit. The Apostle Paul wrote, "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit," (Ephesians 5:18) In the book of Jude we read, "But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit," (Jude 20) **The Disciples were Baptised in the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4) but after persecution (Acts 4:14-21) following the healing of a lame man (Acts Chapter 3) they prayed for boldness and were again filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:29-31) The Apostle Paul prayed for the Holy Spirit's power to fill every believer. (Ephesians 3:14-21)**